

1406

A

FREE TRADE

BETWEEN

IRELAND and the EAST INDIES,

SUBMITTED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE

People of this Country,

BY, A

FREE MERCHANT of the EAST INDIES,

A Native of this Kingdom.

MARCH 1, 1791.

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FREE TRADE

BETWEEN

IRELAND and the EAST INDIES, &c.

HAVING devoted several Years, of my Life to the Commerce of the *East Indies*, I think it a Duty incumbent on me to communicate to my Countrymen, from Time to Time, such useful Information as I have been able to acquire, in Consequence of any local Knowledge or familiar Intercourse that I have had in foreign Parts.

Before I set out from *England* I passed my Examination, and lodged a Certificate in the Admiralty-office, of my being qualified for an Officer in his Majesty's Naval Service; and having obtained Free Merchants Indentures from the united Company of Merchants of *England*, trading to the *East Indies*, authorizing me to trade in all Places beyond

the *Cape of Good Hope* and the *Straits of Magellon*, I took up either, or both Professions, as best suited my Purpose.

During my Stay in that Quarter, I navigated in the *Chinese Sea*, *Bay of Bengal*, *Persian Gulf*, *Red Sea*, among the *Sundee* and *Phillipine Islands*, and in various other Parts, where the Navigation was unfrequented and hazardous, and of course, if I have Talents capable of benefiting by Experience, this little Effort of mine may, at the present Crisis, prove useful to such of my Countrymen as have always resided at home.

As the Natives of this Kingdom have so frequently distinguished themselves in the Service of foreign Powers for their Bravery, Abilities, and a Spirit of Enterprize, I have often wondered that they should be so passive, lukewarm, and inactive at home; and I really pitied them, because I imagined they were cowed and fettered by the Laws. But the Lights which have been thrown upon this Subject, in the Course of our recent Debates in the House of Commons, may convince them that their Fears are ill founded, and that if they exert themselves, there are no Laws, either human or divine, (except such as are made by their own Representatives) that can fairly prevent them from trafficking with the Inhabitants of any Part of the Globe, who may be inclined to trade with them.

Let me now point out to my Countrymen the many Nations who have acquired all their Power and Grandeur from having had a direct Trade to the East. In ancient Times the *Hebrews*, *Tyrians*, *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, and *Romans*; and in modern Times, the *Venetians*, *Gyrene*, *Portuguese*, *English*, and *Dutch*, have all raised themselves to Eminence,

Wealth, and to a surprising Degree of naval Power, by being possessed of this Trade. Then why need I stimulate my Countrymen to adopt what has enriched all other Nations? Or to convince them, that what has bestowed the Dominion of the Sea in Times past and present, is necessary to them, and that in a Matter of this Nature we are to be guided by Experience, it is scarce possible to err. Our insular Situation, extensive Sea-coasts, Fresh-water Lakes, large Rivers, fertile Soil, numerous Inhabitants, Canals, Mines, Collieries, Fisheries, and as fine Ports and Harbours as any in the World, ready to embrace the Trade of *Asia*, *Africa*, *America*, and the northern Parts of *Europe*; with these Advantages, can it admit of a Doubt, that a direct Intercourse between us and the *East Indies* must have all the Advantages that any Trade can possibly have?

It is devoutly to be wished, that a cordial Unanimity should subsist between the Inhabitants of *Great Britain*, *Ireland*, *Hanover*, and indeed between his Majesty's Subjects in all Quarters of the Globe; for being under the same Sovereign, it is natural to suppose it to be their mutual Interests to support and protect each other. On this Ground *Great Britain* must find its Account in encouraging, and even in assisting us to participate in a Share of this *Eastern* Traffick; for the more opulent we are, the better able we shall be on future Emergencies, to supply our Sister Kingdom with Men and Money; and our Taxes for the Support of Government must bear a Proportion to our Increase of Wealth and Affluence. But I am digressing from my intended Purpose, for I did not mean to touch at present upon Politicks.

To shew that a Commerce between this Kingdom and the *East Indies* has been no new Idea of mine, and that I have had it long in Contemplation, I herewith present to my Countrymen the Copy of a Letter and some other Papers, which I addressed to the ostensible Minister of this Kingdom above four Years ago : but being then aware that the Law militated against Ships discharging an *Eastern* Cargo here, I only glanced at what might have been done as Matters then stood, and by the following little Sketch of the Plan of a Voyage which I handed to the Minister, you may perceive, that the Ship destined for such an Enterprise was neither to land her *Eastern* Cargo in *Ireland*, nor to touch at any of the *English East India Company's* Ports.

Copy of a Letter addressed to the Minister of this Kingdom, dated Dublin, 13th January, 1787, and also Copies of the Papers which accompanied that Letter.

S I R,

SHORT as the Conversation was which I had the Honour of having with you last *Wednesday*, I could easily perceive it to be your Opinion, that a lucrative Trade could not be carried on from this Kingdom to the *East Indies*, without stopping at some of the *English Company's* Settlements; therefore, I take the Liberty of sending you the inclosed Sketch of the Plan of a Voyage, which does not at all interfere with the *English Territories* on the other Side of the *Cape of Good Hope*.

It appears to me that these Kingdoms would gain considerably in the Balance of Trade, and that Government would benefit very much, by the *East India Company's* pursuing their mercantile Concerns to the full Extent, and ceasing to grasp at more Territory than is necessary to carry it on. There are Two-thirds of the Countries within the Limits of their Charters, (I mean that vast Extent of Country, which is perhaps the most

rich and fertile Part of the Globe, lying between the Longitude of about 140d. *East*, and the Longitude of 180d. *East*, and from thence to the Longitude of 140d. *West*) with which the Company hath not at present the least Intercourse, except of late to *Botany Bay*, and so far as regards the single Port of *Canton*. As to the Trade to *Canton*, so long as it is carried on in the present Manner, it must unavoidably be disadvantageous to *England* as a Nation, however convenient it may be to the Company individually, it being now carried on by Super-cargoes, without having any Settlement, enjoyed in common with other Nations, and purchased for the most Part with Bullion. But even the Balance of this Trade with *China* might be changed in our Favour, if the Enlargement of the Commerce I have in View should take Place, for it would enable us to spare our Bullion, and in its Stead to barter with Spices, Gold Dust, and the other Produce of these Countries alluded to.

The many Discoveries which have been made since the Company first obtained their Charter, have entirely changed the Face of Affairs; what appeared both right and requisite when the Charter was granted, ceased to be so when Circumstances were altered, and should not operate now to the Detriment and Disadvantage of all the rest of his Majesty's Subjects: but this has been the Case hitherto, and a Trade with the richest Quarter of the Globe is entirely lost to these Kingdoms, in Consequence of the *East India Company's* Neglect or Inability to carry it on, and their Charters excluding all others from making the Attempt.

The Navigation to and from these Parts I allude to, might be performed with as much Expedition and Safety as our present *India* Voyages, by steering from the *Ethiopic* Ocean into the Latitude of about 42 d. *South*, and then running *Easterly* to the *Pacific* Ocean, and along the East Coast of *New Holland* to *New Britain*. By an Establishment in these Parts we should soon rival the *Dutch* in the *Spice* and *Japan* Trade. But this is only Part of the Advantages which might be derived, for there are many others, the Idea of which strikes me very strongly, though I am but ill qualified to express them on Paper. I look at the Trade of *Corea* and *Japan*, and from those Countries, to the probable Discovery of an easterly Passage to *Europe*; I mean that Passage which has been so often unsuccessfully attempted from hence, and is so well known by the Name of the *N. W. Passage*.

There is great Room to expect, that a Country which extends from the Seventh *South* Climate to the Tenth *North* Climate, would prove the greatest Mart for our Woollen Manufactures, and that we might carry on a very profitable Commerce with the Produce of our own Country, without exporting any Bullion. Indeed our Merchants, not having hitherto had Intercourse in these Parts, must have a very faint Notion of a Traffick in them; and I know how apt the World is to treat every Thing deviating from the ordinary Course as chimerical. But I am myself convinced, that in the Parts I have pointed out, it is practicable by suitable Exertions, either through the Medium of the Company, or by authorizing others, if it is not convenient to the Company to extend their

Concerns, to open such a new Source of Commerce for the Consumption of our home Manufactures, as would amply compensate for the Loss of our Trade to *America*.

If these loose Hints on the Subject of enlarging the Sphere of our commercial System in the *East Indies*, should draw the Attention of those who are qualified to improve and make the proper Use of them, my Purpose in troubling you will be wholly answered.

With great Respect,

I have the Honour to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble Servant.

(A) *Invoice of Goods shipped on Board the Hibernia, Capt. Thompson, from Ireland, to the Coast of Mallabar, in the East Indies, for Account and Risk of, &c.*

		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>		<i>l.</i>
200 Tons Bar Iron,	-	at 13	0	per Ton,	2600
150 do. Sheet Copper,		at 96	0	per do.,	14400
50 do. Pig Lead,	-	at 14	10	per do.	725
20 do. Ship Anchors,		at 32	0	per do.,	640
30 do. Cordage,	-	at 32	0	per do.	960
60 do. Iron Cannon,		at 15	0	per do.	900
20000 Muskets,	-	at 0	18	per Musk.	18000
100 Pipes Madeira, to be taken in on the					
Way, touching at the <i>Madeiras</i> , at					
£25 per Pipe,					2500

40725

Quick Silver, Glass Ware, Wines of various Sorts, Tar, Cutlery, &c.

(B) *Sales of a Cargo of Goods received per the Hibernia, Capt. Thompson, from Ireland, for and on Account of, &c. according to the last Price current.*

200 Tons Bar Iron, at 100 Rupees per	l.	s.
Bombay Candy of 760 lb. - -	7368	10
150 Tons Sheet Copper, at 23 Rupees per		
Bombay Maind, of 38 lb. - -	25430	15
50 Tons Pig Lead, at 16 Rupees per cwt.	2000	0
20 do. Anchors, at 500 do. per Ton,	1250	0
60 do. Iron Cannon, at 300 do. do.	2250	0
20000 Muskets, - at 24 do. each, -	60000	0
100 Pipes Madeira, at 400 do, per Pipe,	5000	0
30 Tons Cordage, at 500 do. per Ton,	1950	0
	<hr/>	
	105249	5

CHARGES.

Commission, at 5l. per cent.	5262	}
Duties, - at 5l. ditto, -	5262	
Leakage, Porterage, Warehouse		
Rent, Boat-hire, &c. &c.	2531	
	<hr/>	
	13055	0
	<hr/>	
	92194	5

Dr. Voyage to India per the Hibernia,

No. 1.

To prime Cost of a Ship, 1000 Tons Burden, fit for Sea,	£.	s.
	12000	0
To 3 Months Imprefs to Captain, Officers, and Men, at £160 per Month,	480	0
To victualling 100 Men, at one Shilling per Day per Man, for twelve Months,	1825	0
To original Invoice, Letter (A),	40725	0
To Premium of Insurance on £55030 for two Years, at 5 per cent. per ann.	5503	0
To Interest on ditto, for two Years, at 5 per cent. per ann.	5503	0
To Balance,	26158	5
	<hr/>	
	92194	5

No. 2.

INDIA.

To Amount of Invoice (C) Piece Goods bought in <i>India</i> for the <i>Manilla</i> Market,	30000	0
To ditto (D) for the <i>China</i> Market,	40000	0
To ditto (E) for <i>Rio-de-la-Plata</i> , and <i>Brassills</i> ,	19889	5
To Imprefs and Victualling as above,	2305	0
To Balance brought to new Account,	38964	0
	<hr/>	
	131158	5

Capt. Thompson, for Account of, &c. Cr.

By nett Proceeds of Sales in *India* as per Acc. (B) £. s.
92194 5

92194 5

By Balance from Account No. 1, 26158 5
By nett Proceeds at *Manilla*, as per Invoice (C)
Sales (F), at 50 per cent. 45000 0
By ditto at *China* as per Invoice (D), Sales (G),
at 50 per cent. 60000 0

131158 5

Dr. Voyage to India per the Hibernia,

No. 3. CHINA.

To Amount of Invoice (H) Goods for <i>Rio-de-la-Plata</i> and <i>Brassills</i> ,	£.	s.
To ditto (IK) for the free Ports in the <i>West Indies</i> ,	30000	0
To Balance brought to new Account,	75000	0
	131242	10
	<hr/>	
	236242	10
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No. 4. WEST INDIES.

To Amount of Invoice (O) for Sugars, Coffee, Cotton, and Indigo,	40000	0
To Cash in Bills and Bullion,	91242	10
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	131242	10
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EUROPE.

To 18 Months Pay to Officers and Men, at 160 per Month,	3280	0
To Captain and Officers Privilege,	6000	0
To Balance,	131962	10
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	141242	10
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Capt. Thompson, for Account, &c.

Cr.

By Balance from Account No. 2,	£.	s.
By nett Proceeds at <i>Rio-de-la-Plata</i> and <i>Brassills</i> , per Invoice (F), Sales (L), at 100 per cent.	38964	0
By ditto, (H) Sales (M) at 50 do.	39778	10
By ditto for the <i>West Indies</i> , Invoice (IK) Sales (N) at 50 percent.	45000	0
	112500	0

236242 10

By Balance from Account No. 3,	131242	10
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By nett Proceeds in <i>Europe</i> , as per Invoice (O), Sales (Q), at 10 percent.	44000	0
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By Bills and Bullion, as per Contra,	91242	10
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By Sale of Ship and Materials,	6000	0
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141242 10

An Explanation of the foregoing Sketch of the Plan of
a Voyage to the East Indies, and back again to
Europe.

THE Invoice and Out-fit from *Europe* is plain to every common Trader in these Kingdoms, and the Account Sales marked (B) are conformable to some late Price-currents received from the *Mallabar Coast*. The Account Sales at *Manilla* are estimated at only 50 per cent. though it is well known that the Country Ships, who trade there with *India Piece Goods*, &c. are seldom content with less than 100 per cent. Profit, and Payments are always made to them in *Spanish Dollars*.

There is but 50 per cent. allowed on *Mallabar Goods* sold at the *China Market*, though by some late Price-currents from *Canton*, *Pepper*, *Sandalwood*, *Cardamoms*, and several other Commodities from that Coast, produced a nett Profit in *China* of 100 per cent.

And as to the Adventure to *Rio-de-la-Plata*, the *Brassills*, and the free Ports in the *West Indies*, &c. as this has been a new Idea of my own, I shall only say for the present, that it may be presumed the Profits would be immense; when it is considered, that all the *China* and *India Goods* which these Countries now consume, are first landed in *Europe*, afterwards exported to these very distant

Parts, sold to great Advantage there, and the Returns made, for the most Part, in Silver and Gold.

As the Success of all such Enterprises as are to be carried on in Countries where the Monsoon Winds prevail, depend as much on timing the Seasons of the Year, as it does on the different Investments and other Incidents belonging to a foreign Voyage, in my humble Opinion, a Ship destined for such an Undertaking, should be dispatched from these Countries as soon after *Christmas* as possible, so as to arrive on the *Mallabar* Coast about the beginning of *May*, when the S W Monsoon is regularly set in there. The Land and Sea Breezes which then prevail along that Coast, facilitate the sailing of Vessels to the *Northward* as far as *Surat*, and the Ship should touch at the different Ports in her Way, to vend the outward Cargo, and to make new Investments for the *Manilla* and *China* Markets.

She should leave *Surat* as early in the Month of *July* as her Business could admit of, when she would be sure of a strong S. W. Monsoon to carry her to the Straits of *Malaca*; and by keeping well to the Southward in going through the *China* Sea, she would easily reach *Manilla*, do her Business there, and get to *Canton* long before the N. E. Monsoon set in. Should it then be deemed expedient for the Ship to return directly to *Europe*, that being a Trade and a Navigation already too much hackneyed, there can be nothing new detailed on the Subject. But if stopping at *Rio-de-la-Plata*, the *Brassills*, and the free Ports in the *West Indies*, &c. should be adopted, I can easily prove, that the Profits I have specified in the foregoing Statement

may certainly be realized, and that the whole Voyage would not require above six Months more to accomplish it, than if the Ship had sailed directly from *Canton to Europe*.

THOUGH the Calculations in this Sketch are far below the Profits usually expected on similar Occasions, yet, upon an Outfit of £66036 it appears, that beside the Principal, Interest, and Premium of Insurance, the Merchants engaged in this new Commerce must, in the Course of two Years, divide the nett Profit of £131962 10s. Great Complaints having been formerly made by the Directors of the *English East India Company* of the Decay of their Trade, the Ministry caused the Amount of the Company's Sales to be constantly published, by which the fallacious Representations of the Directors were discovered, and Foreigners were struck with such Amazement, that it contributed greatly to forward the Projects which some Countries had formed, of obtaining a Share of this very lucrative Traffick; particularly the *Danes* and *Swedes*; whose *East India Companies* had risen, from the oppressive Acts that were made against the Subjects of the Maritime Powers who were concerned in the *Ostend Company*.

I have frequently conversed and corresponded for some Years past, with several Personages and Gentlemen of the first Rank, Consequence, and

Character in this and the Sister Kingdom, on the Subject of this Country's having a commercial Inter-
course with the Inhabitants of the *Eastern Hemisphere*; and were it not that it must, at all Times, be taking from Life the social Pleasures of living, to expose the private Conversations and Correspondence of Individuals, my Countrymen might soon be convinced that I have been indefatigable in their Service, and ready to contribute my Mite towards their obtaining a Share of this very lucrative Trade.

Finding it had been the Opinion of several Gentlemen in the Service of Government, that the Badness of Dublin Harbour was an unsurmountable Barrier in the Way of an *East India* Commerce, and knowing how ungracious it would be not to have the Capital of this Kingdom take the Lead in an *Asiatic* Trade, I dedicated the greatest Part of last Summer in informing myself how such an Impediment could be obviated; and the Result has been, that I am now thoroughly satisfied, *this Harbour* is capable of being rendered equal to the receiving Ships of any Burden, and as fit for the Purposes of an *East India*, a *Greenland*, or an *African* Trade, &c. as any Port in this Kingdom.

I shall enlarge no farther at present on this Subject, because that on a future Occasion I intend to descant more fully and minutely on the improving and enlarging the Harbour of *Dublin*; as also on an *East India* Trade, and on the Advantages of promoting Commerce, Manufactures, and Sciences in this Kindom, so as to increase the Wealth and Opulence of its Inhabitants, and to banish from them such groundless Prejudices as must be the

Effects of a narrow Capacity, and are productive of nothing but Poverty and Pride.

As I only took up my Pen to write these few Lines, since the recent Debates on *East India* Affairs commenced in the House of Commons, they were of course thrown together in a Hurry; therefore, I hope the Public will be so good as to make some Allowance for such Mistakes and Inaccuracies as may appear in them.